

7 12
THE
STRAIT GATE
TO HEAVEN.

A

693. d 20
Sermon preached before the
poore distressed Prisoners in the
Kings Bench common Goale,
to their heavenly
comfort. 13
14

By WILLIAM KING Preacher of the
Word of God.

ROM. 8. 18.

*The afflictions of this present time are not worthy of the
glory which shall be shewed unto vs.*

LONDON.

Printed by GEORGE ELD.

1622.

THE

STRAIT GATE TO HEAVEN

Second Edition

By the same Author

King's College

London

1841

By William King Esq. of the Inner Temple

10th of Oct

1841

Printed by J. G. & Co. 10, Abchurch Lane, London

Printed by J. G. & Co. 10, Abchurch Lane, London

Printed by J. G. & Co. 10, Abchurch Lane, London

Printed by J. G. & Co. 10, Abchurch Lane, London

Printed by J. G. & Co. 10, Abchurch Lane, London



THE STRAIT GATE TO HEAVEN.

Strive to enter in at the strait Gate: for many (I say unto you) will seeke to enter in and shall not be able. Luke 13. 14.



Our Lord Iesus Christ saith in the 20. of Matth. Many are called, but few are chosen. In the 7. of Matth. Vers. 13. hee *Vi. lata & spacioſa.* bids vs, Enter in at the strait Gate: for it is the wide Gate and broade way that leadeth to destruction: many there be that goe in thereat: because the Gate is strait and the way narrow, that leadeth vnto life, and few there bee that find it.

In this place of Saint Luke we reade of a *Luk. 13. 23.* certaine man which came to our Saviour

The strait Gate

*Orta, dicit
iam.*
Christ and asked him of purpose, whether few should bee saved. To whom our Lord Jesus answered thus; Strive to enter in at the strait Gate for many (I say vnto you) will seeke to enter in, and shall not bee able. In which answer albeit our Saviour doth not answer directly to his question, either negatively, or affirmatiuely: yet doth hee plainly insinuate by his speeches, that few shall bee saved.

Reuerend regarded in Christ Jesus: this is a sufficient motiue whereby our Saviour Christ so warneth vs, that if wee doe not in time repent, forsake our sinnes and seeke after God: both the ancient Christian Fathers, (whose eyes saw not what we see, nor their eares heard not that we heare) yea, the very Heathen also shall rise vp in iudgement against vs. For it is good counsell which S. Augustine giueth; Quid prodest si omnia habes, cum tamen qui omnia dedit non habere? What is a man the better though he haue all things, and be without him which is the author of all things.

Let none therefore stumble at it: but if any doe, let them remember the charge that we haue also from God. Oh (saith one) consideret periculum meum: He that is displeased

sed with mee let him consider my danger: for
 saith not God to Jeremy, that hee would de- Ier. 1. 17.
 stroy him befoze his face if he held his peace?
 Saint Augustine saith very well; Quid tu
 succenses mortalibus, sub iussione Christi mare
 audit, & tu surdus es? O worne of the earth
 why dost thou storne? the sea heard and o-
 beyed the voyce of Christ: and dost thou stop
 thy eares? Mare audit, ventus cessat, & tu
 sufflas? The sea waxed calme, the wind was
 still, and dost thou begin to bluster and swell?
 Doe not we speake from the mouth of God?
 Doth not the holy Ghost giue vs lofty and Tit. 1. 7.
 glorious titles? as the Stewards of Gods 1 Cor. 4. 1.
 owne house, disposers of his secrets, dis- Mat. 16. 19,
 burers of his treasures, keepers of the 20.
 broad seale, keepers of the keyes of heauen, Apoc. 3. 7.
 Gods Secretaries, Gods Embassadors, An- 24.
 gels, yea, the very glory of Christ: and all 2 Cor. 8. 23.
 this to expresse the excellencie of our calling:
 yet the wild varlets and venemous vermine
 of the earth dare call vs proud Prelates,
 pild Parsons, and pelling Priests. O mon-
 strous and intollerable impietie: I speake to
 all sorts, not to some few of one sort. But that
 which herein I speake is not much more then AAs 7.
 that of the Apostle Paul (as some of your owne

The strait Gate.

4 Poets hane said) which is warrantable.

One thing therefore deare Christians let me beg of you : to wit, that you would heare diligently, receiue zealously, and iudge soberly and discreetly; Non mea verba sunt sed verba vitæ eternæ : They are not my words but the words of eternall life. For the word of God hath sundry hearers : some receiue it, some receiue it not. Note the Parable of the sēde: the sēd of the word of God when it was sowed : some fell by the high-way side, some vpon stony ground, some vpon thornes, and some in good ground, &c. But more briefly and strictly the word of God hath two sorts of hearers : Elect and Reprobate. The Elect say with Peter : Domine ad quem ibimus? verba vitæ eternæ habes : Master, to whom shall we goe? thou hast the words of eternall life. The Reprobate say; Durus est hic sermo : This is a hard saying, who can heare it? can mortality put on immortality? can this corruption put on incorruption? can Christ bee God and man? can God beget a Son? as of late the Deuill of Foxwich diuinely said & pra, worse then a Deuill was he : For the Devils in the 4. of Luke acknowledged Christ, crying saying, thou art Christ the son of God, but this deuill denyed Christ.

The

The word of God is preached in vaine to many : the honey is lost that is put into vessels of gall : the fish is cast away that is put into dry pooles : and the seede perissheth that is sowed vpon the sand. Saint Cyprian saith; *Cyprian cont. Dem. Tract. 1. pag.*
Certe labor irritus est, & nullus effectus offerre, lumen caeco, sermonem furdo, sapientiam bruto : cum nec sentire brutus possit, nec caecus lumen admittere, nec surdus audire. Truly it is lost labour and to no purpose, to offer light to a blind man, speech to a deafe man, wisdom to a grosse head: seeing that a grosse head cannot perceiue, a blinde man cannot see, and a deafe man cannot heare. The ancient Father Origen saith; Quanto melius esset nonnullis omnino non audire verbum Dei, quam audire cum malicia, vel audire cum hypocrisi : melius autem dicimus ad comparationem malorum : How much better were it for some not to heare the word of God at all, then to heare with malice, or to heare it with hypocrisie, we say, better in respect of evils.

Therefore my deare Brethren and fellow Prisoners, your friendly censure I humbly desire, to gather with your diligent attention, and due regard of the matter ensuing : In the opening & explication of these words of our Saviour Christ : wherein, I doe as-

The Strait Gate

sure you, I meddle not at al with any contro-
uerſies in the Church, or any thing in the
ſtate Eccleſiaſticall, but onely enter into a
controverſie with Satan and ſinne. It is
contrained into three principall heads: where-
in our Saviour Chriſt declareth how hard a
thing it is to enter into life, and how few
ſhall enter. In the firſt our Lord Jeſus bids
us ſtrive earneſtly. In the ſecond, hee affir-
meth that the gate is very ſtrait. In the
third, hee ſaith, many which ſeek to enter in
ſhall not be able.

The particulars that occurre (as many
there are) they ſhall bee touched rather then
handled in their place.

As touching the firſt head, where he bids
us ſtrive earneſtly, noting thereby that it is
a matter of great ſtrife againſt the World,
the Fleſh, and the Devill: and therefore we
may rather wonder that any ſhall bee ſaved,
then ſo few ſhall be ſaved. For wee have all
the lets and hinderances that may bee, both
within us and without us: we have (as they
ſay) the Sun, Moone, & ſeven ſtarres againſt
us: wee have all the Devils in hell againſt
us, with all their hoznes, heads, marvellous
ſtrength, infinite wiles, cunning devices,
deepe ſights, and methodicall temptations.

Here

Here comes a fozellcraime against vs: then
 haue wee this present euill world against vs
 with his innumerable bailes, snares, nets,
 ginnes, grins, &c. to catch vs, & fetter vs, and
 entangle vs. Here we haue both profits and
 pleasures, riches and honour, wealth and
 preferment, ambition & conetousnesse. Here
 comes a campe royall of spirituall and inui-
 sible enemies. Lastly, wee haue our flesh,
 that is, our corrupted nature against vs: we
 haue our selues against our selues: For wee
 our selues are as great enemies to our sal-
 uation as either the world or the Deuill:
 For our vnderstanding, reason, will and af-
 fections are altogether against vs. Our na-
 turall wisdom is an enemy to vs: our con-
 cupiscences and lusts doe minister strength
 to Satans temptations, they are all in
 league with Satan against vs, they take
 part with him in euery thing against vs
 and our saluation, they fight all vnder his
 standard, and receiue their pay of him: This
 then goeth hard on our side, that the Deuill
 hath an inward party against vs, and wee
 carry alwaies within vs our greatest ene-
 mie, which is euer ready night and day to
 betray vs into the hands of Satan: yea, to
 vnboltt the doore to let him in to cut our
 throates.

The strait Gate

throats. Here then we see an huge army of
dreadfull enemies, and a very legion of De-
vils lying in ambush against our soules: are
not wee therefore poore wretches, in a most
pittifull case, which are thus besieged and
betrayed on every side? All things then du-
ly considered, may not wee truly murmur
that any shall be saved? For who seeth not,
who knoweth not, that thousand thousands
are carried headlong to destruction (without
the great mercy of God?) either with the
temptations of the world, the flesh, or the
Devill. But yet further I will shew you, by
other apparant and evident reasons, that
the number of Gods Elect upon the face of
the earth are very few in comparison, which
may thus be considered. First, let there be
taken away from amongst vs the Papists,
Atheists, and Heretiques. Secondly, let
there be shouelled out all vitious and noto-
rious evill liners, as swearers, drunkards,
whoremongers, carnall worshipping, decei-
ners, coseners, proud men, riotors, game-
sters, and the prophane multitude. Thirdly,
let there be refused and sorted out all hypo-
crites, carnall Protestants, vaine professors,
backsliders, decliners, and cold Christians.
Let all these (I say) be separated, and then
tell

tell mee how many sound, sincere, faithfull, and zealous worshippers of God will bee found amongst vs : I suppose wee should not neede the Art of Arithmeticke to number them, for I thinke there would be very few in euery village, towne and City, I doubt they would walke very thinly in the street, so as a man might easily tell them as they goe. Our Lord Jesus asketh a question in the Gospell of Saint Luke, saying; Doe you thinke when the sonne of man commeth, that hee shall find faith on the earth ? to the which wee may answer, surely very little.

Luke 18. 8.

To make it moze cleerely manifest that few shall bee saued : in the first age of the world, all flesh had so corrupted their waies that God could no longer beare them, but euen halwed their destruction by overflowing of waters : when the flood came how few were found faithfull : eight persons were onely saued by the Arke. How few righteous found in Sodome, and the Cities adioyning? but one poore Lot and his family. How few beleeuers were found in Jericho? but one Rahab. How few of the old Israelites entered into the land of Promise? but two, Caleb and Iosuah : the rest could not enter in because of vnbeleefe. The true and indis-
ble

1 Kings 17.

ble Church was small, during the government of the Judges, as appeareth plentifully in that booke. In Elias time the Church was so small that it did appeare weake. In the raigne of the Kings of Israel & Judah, the sincere worshippers were very few, as appeareth by the complaint of all the Prophets. During the captivity, the Church was as the Moone vnder a cloud: shee was vttered into a wilderness, where she did hide herselfe. During the persecution of the Greke Empire by Gog and Magog, and Egypt, they were fewest of all. In Christs time, with what silly company did hee begin hith, all? How were all things corrupted by the Priests, Scribes, and Pharisees preaching, there were few beleeuers. After the first six hundredeth yeeres, what an eclipse was in the Church: during the height of Antichrists raigne, How few true worshippers of God were in the world for the space of almost nine hundredeth yeeres? Since the Gospell was preached and spread abroade how few doe beleue? And as the Prophet Esay saith, Domine quis credidit auditui nostro? Lord who hath beleued our reports? Thus then you see, it doth appeare (both by Scripture, reason, and examples of all ages) that the number

Esa. 53.1.

number of the elect is very small, and when all comes to all few shall be saved. Therefore let vs strine earnestly to go in at the strait Gate, for the small number of those that shall be saved ought to thrust vs forward to enter in thereat. Christ saith Contendite intrare per angustam portam, Luk. 13. 24. quia multi (dico vobis) studebunt intrare, & non poterunt: Strive to enter in at the narrow Gate, for many (I say unto you) will seeke to enter in and shall not be able. And in another place, hee saith; The Gate is strait and the way narrow that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. If men would consider of this, and try with themselves whether they be of that small number or no; it would make them looke better about them, &c. Death threatneth vs, who is very terrible to the flesh, and the remembrance, of it very bitter to a man that is sowled, soaked and settled in the pleasures of this world. It flattereth no man, it regardeth not persons, it weigheth not friendship, it careth not for rewards, it is very grimme, ugly, and cruell, and killeth downe right where it hitteth. Therefore, Christ bids vs strine earnestly. To knit up this point, Bernard saith; there is none of vs all which

Mat. 14.

Bernard.
Sermone 7.
de aduent.
domini.

Can,

The strait Gate.

standeth not in neede of counsell, props, and helpe. The generall misery of mankind is triple, &c. For both wee are easie to be seduced, and unable to doe well, and very weake to resist. If we would discern betweene good and euill, wee are deceived: if we goe about to goe good, wee quickly faint: if we endeavour to resist euill, wee cannot endure, but are easily overcome. The tyrannie and rage of Satan is unspeakable, and his power mightie: the baits of the world be innumerable, and our flesh fraile and weake: They are three deadly enemies to our saluation, against whom we must all ioyntly fight.

1 Pet. 5. 8.

6.

12.

1 Iohn 5.

16

1 Iohn 2.

16.

Gal. 5.

Our aduersary the Devill is a roaring Lyon rangeth about, seeketh whom hee may deuoure, and inuenteth a thousand waies to entrap vs, and bring vs to everlasting shame and destruction. For Saint Paul saith, wee wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against rule, against powers, against worldly governors of the darknesse of this world, against spirituall wickednesse in all spirituall places. Our second enemy is the world, the whole world is altogether set on wickednesse, there is nothing in the world but the lust of the flesh the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

The

The third, our flesh, our flesh which rebelleth and lusteth contrary to the spirit, fleshly lusts fight against the soule: Here you see what enemies they bee to our salvation. 1 Pet. 2. 11

How then shall wee strine to enter in at the strait Gate and narrow way leading to everlasting life? First, resist the Devill and he will flye from you. Resist him in faith, in Prayer, and in the word. Secondly, be crucified to the world even as strangers, which are not of the world. For wee have no abiding Citie here: but wee seeke one to come, saith the Apostle. Lastly, chastise thy body with watchings, with labour, with fastings: The waies
& meanes
of striving.
it is a great victoꝝy to overcome the Devill, a greater to overcome the world, and the greatest of all to overcome thy flesh & fleshly unruly affections. To him that overcome meth shall bee given a crowne: But hee that is overcome shall bee the continuall bondman of Satan, our vile and cruell enemy. Luke 4.
2 Tim 4.
Gal. 6. 14.
Heb. 13, 14
Let vs so strine that we may overcome: hee onely that striveth lawfully shall bee crowned. Let every man therefore keepe his stand or station in all obedience and readinesse. Stoutly must we fight vnder Christs victorious Banner. They are not trifles

The strait Gate

14

for which wee strine: therefore let vs not
shrink nor cowardly runne away: but with
an invincible courage in an assured hope of
victory, abide all warlike miseries sustay-
ned with the comfort of that reward: which
no man shall receive except he strine lawfull-
ly. As man that putteth his hand to the
plough and looketh backwards is worthy of
the kingdome of heauen: but hee that endu-
reth to the end shall be saved.

Now wee strine for Christ and not for
Antichrist; for the truth, and not against it.

I can doe nothing against the truth but for
the truth, saith Saint Paul: for the Gospell,
and not for the doctrine of men: for true Re-
ligion, not for superstition must wee strine.

But our strining for the most part is all a
wry and wicked: wee strine who may be the
proudest, pretending equalitie: we strine in-
deed for superiority, neither equall nor supe-
rior can we abide: we strine how to supplant
and overthrow one another: enuy hath
made men impudent, striving to undermine
and cast downe the walles of innocency:
striving how to place and displace, how to
disgrace, and how to bring into favour, how
to set vp and how to throw downe. And in
so doing wee strine against our selues, and
for

for

2 Tim. 2.

Mat. 10.

1 Cor. 13.

for the advantage of our deadly foes. This warre is not Christian, this is not to striue lawfully: this is not to fight a good fight: this victory shall not bee crowned.

Behold, in a word, I speake vnto you althow many are there among you (a shame to speake it) that seeke to striue against your selues, but follow the example of the multitude; namely, in swearing, blasphemy, cursed speaking, rayling, backbiting, flandering, chiding, quarrelling, contention, teasing, mocking, flattering, lying, dissimbling, &c. These things doe overflow in all places, so as men which feare God had better be any where then in company with such men.

Lactantius Firmianus speaking of the end of the world, saith; Si erunt boni, præde ac ludibrio habebuntur: If there remaine any good men at that time, they shall be counted a prey, a booty, a mocking stocke. Canst thou not flatter? Canst thou not lye? Canst thou not play the Hypocrite? Canst thou not follow the fashion, and serue the stage? No, then thou art no meete man to live in this world: choose a few companions. But I say vnto you as Nestor did vnto his children,

*Lactant.
Acephali
cap. 11.*

dzem; pray, for vantage God helpe vs, we all
perish.

Now I beseech you brethren and fellow
prisoners, euen for Iesus Christs sake, doe
not as the multitude doth, which we see dai-
ly before our eyes, to wallow in wickednes:
but keepe your selues from the broad way
and wide gate, leading vnto everlasting
damnation.

Strive earnestly. The Almighty God
of his ineffable goodnesse, when hee saw the
weaknesse of our flesh by nature prone to
euill, and therefore vnable to withstand the
Devill, who is called a Dragon with seven
heads for his subtilty, and ten hornes for his
cruelty) euen then most lovingly shewed an
excellent remedy whereby we might preserve
our selues from injury, and that is prayer.
It becometh vs to take it for our weapon,
that we may keepe our selues from the in-
uasion of Satan. For as the Lyon (at the
sight of a Cocker) is discomforted, and at his
crowing betaketh himselfe to his heeles: So
doth Satan both stand in feare of a godly
man, and flye at his prayer. And Lactantius
noteth, Devils doe hurt but the faint heart-
ed: such as the great and mightie hand of
God doth not protect, which are prophane
from

Gaudetius
Merula de
merorabili-
bus l. 20. 9.
Lactant. de
error. c. 16.

from y^e sacrament of truth: but the iust, that
is, the true worshippers of God, doe the De-
uils feare.

Let vs valiantly take this weapon in
hand, and manfully fight with Satan and
sinne: let vs try our combat in the field of the
holy Scriptures; let vs begin to traaverse the
way of Gods Commandements, & breake
into these woordes; The afflictions of this pre-
sent time are not worthy of the glory that
shall bee shewed vnto vs. Let vs strue to en-
ter in at the strait Gate and narrow way, lea-
ding vnto eternall saluation: to wit, Charity,
which is the roote and mother of all good
works: joy in seruing of God, peace or tran-
quillity of mind in the stormes of this world:
patience in aduersitie, longanimity in ex-
pecting our reward: benity in hurting no
man: benignity in sweet behauiour: gentle-
nesse in occasion giuen of anger: faithfulness
in performance of our promises: modestie
without arrogancy: continence from all
kind of wickednesse: chastitie in conseruing
a pure mind in a cleane and vnspeckled body.
Against these, saith Saint Paul, there is
no Law: contrarily, let vs shunne and auoid
the broad way and wide Gate leading vnto
euermlasting destruction namely, fornication,

Rom. 8. 19.

Gal. 5. 22.

Gal. 5. 20,
21.

Uncleannesse, wantonnesse, lechery, idolatry, popsonings, enmities, contentions, emulation, wrath, strife, dissention, sects, envy, murder, drunkennesse, gluttony, & such like : of which I foresell you, as I have told you before, that those men which doe such things shall neuer obtaine the kingdome of heauen.

Here then you see how hard a thing it is to strue to enter in at the kingdome of heauen, and how few shall enter, therefore some because it is difficult to strue, strue not at all. But Christ bids vs strue earnestly, and promisseth euermlasting peace and comfort vnto him. Contendenti & vincenti, that strineth & ouercometh, saying, though in the world yet haue no peace, but tribulations and afflictions, yet be of good cheere. Ego vici mundum & omnia in hoc mundo : I haue overcome the world, and all things in this world, and therefore in me, you shal haue peace eternally.

Ioh. 16. 33.

2. Cap.

In the second head our Lord Iesus Christ affirmeth, that the gate is very strait, nothing that none can enter in, without vehement crowding, and almost breaking their shoulder bones : that is, none can enter into eternall life without vehement suit, earnest prayer and supplication vnto God for the forgiveness of their sinnes, wrought by the spirit

spirit of all Christians, with an inward and true repentance: and God shall direct all thy wayes and appoint thee how to goe, either hither or thither as the Prophet Esaias saith; Though the Lord giue thee bread of trouble, and the water of affliction and aduersity, thy raine shall bee no more scant: but thine eyes see the raine: yea, and thine eare shall heare the talking of him that speakes behind thee. This is the way, walke therein, turne not aside neither to the right hand nor the left. Wherefore, hoc opus, hic labor: endeavour we, and let our chiefest care, yea, our greatest endeavour be for the vertue of his grace the antecedent i. glory, both which are his free gifts. The Lord will giue grace and glory, and no good thing will hee withhold from them that walke uprightly.

Esa. 30. 20,

21.

*Panis arctus
breuis.*

As I haue shewed you of sundry lets both within vs and without vs, which doe keepe vs backe from God and hold vs fast in our finnes: so now vnto all that hath bene said before, I will lay forth vnto your view seuen especiall lets and hinderances vnto eternall life: which may not vnfitly bee termed seuen barres out of Heauen, and seuen gates into Hell: and thereby you shall perceiue that the gate is very strait

Psal. 84. 17

that leadeth vnto life, and few there be that find it.

Heb. 4.

The first, which is infidelity, is proued out of the fourth Chapter to the Hebrewes where it is thus written: Vnto vs was the Gospell preached as vnto them: but the word which they heard profited them not, because it was not mixed with faith in those that heard it. And againe, they could not enter in because of vnbeleefe. Here we see that vnbeleefe did barre out the old people from entering into the land of promise: which was a figure of Gods eternall Kingdome. And sure it is, that the same vnbeleefe doth barre out thousands of vs. For many will beleene nothing but their owne fantasies: they will not beleene the Word of God; especially when it is contrary to their lust and likings, profits and pleasures. Though things bee manifestly proued to their faces, and the Chapter and Verse shewed them: yet will they not beleene: or though they say they will beleene, yet will they neuer goe about the practice of any thing, but reply against God in all their actions. And so the most part when God saith one thing, they will either say or doe another: when God saith yea, they will say no, and so gaine God
the

helpe. Some againe will say, if all be true that the Preachers say, then God helpe vs. Thus you see how infidelity doth barre men out of heauen and cast them into hell.

The second Gate, which is the presumption of Gods mercy: for, if men be sharply re-
 proned for their sinnes, and exhorted vnto re-
 pentance, by and by they take conert, saying
 God is mercifull, as though God were made
 all of mercy, and that there were no ius-
 tice in him at all: and thus the wicked
 make Gods mercy an occasion, which
 the Prophet Nahum in the first Chapter
 of his prophesie doth sharply reprove:
 The Lord (saith hee) is slow to anger, but
 hee is great in power, and will not surely
 cleare the wicked. Were wee see that God
 will not surely spare such as goe on in their
 sinnes presuming of his mercy, and saying
 in their hearts, If I may but haue a Lord
 of mercy vpon mee three houres before my
 death, I care not. But it is iust with God
 when those three houres come to shut them
 vp in blindness and hardnesse of heart, as a
 iust plague for their presumption. Therefore
 the Prophet David seeing the grienousnesse
 of this sinne, prayeth to be deliuered fram it.
 Keep me, O Lord, from presumptuous sinnes;

The strait Gate

let them not raigne ouer mee. Let all men therefore take heed of presumptuous sinnes, which is the onely cause that sinne doth so mightily abound in our age : and let vs not continue in sinne, presume of Gods mercy, but let vs come vnto God for mercy, while the gates of mercy are opened vnto vs : For though God bee full of mercy, yet will hee shew no mercy to them that presume of his mercy, but they shall once know to their cost, that iustice goeth from him as well as mercy. And therefore it may well bee called the strait gate to heauen & the wide gate to hell.

Let vs come to the third gate, which is the example of the multitude, for that doth harden and embolden men vnto sin: As when many birds doe flicker & flock together, they fall vpon the net without any feare, but one or two alone will be afraid. Euen so the example of many sin-companions doe embolden men to runne through the snares of Satan without any mistrust. This is proued in the 23. of Ex. where the Lord saith flatly; Thou shalt not follow a multitude to doe euill. This is a thing that bindeth a great number from God, for they neuer looke vp vnto God, or to his Word, but stare vpon the common multitude and doing of most men,

men, and examples of the world, thinking that if they doe as the most men doe, as their forefathers haue done before them, they are cocksure and of an euen ground. And hereupon riseth their deuillish prouerbe: Doe as the most men doe; and the fewest will speake of you, which is a very wicked speech. But they haue forgotten Saint Pauls rule; Ne configuremini seculo isto, &c. Fashion not your selues like vnto this world. These fellows that stand vpon the multitude will reason thus, wee see none of these great ones of the world, none of the noble, none of the rich, none of the wise and prudent receiue this doctrine, but onely a few shackragges, and beggerly rascals, & therfore it is a token that it is nothing worth; and that it is doubtfull, and not for vs to meddle withall. Les what thoughts may creepe in to our hearts, and how sleely Satan may trompe in our way and blindfold vs, and leade vs away in the darke by dotting & dotting vs with the example of the multitude. Let vs therefore take heede of these pitfalls which Satan layeth in the way, and not be carried away with these thoughts & reasons. The wicked beare themselves in hand that they shall winne the game, and that the goale

goeth

goeth on their side, and there is nothing but crowding long before it bee day, and great triumphing among them before any stroke bee stricken: and that because wee bee but a handfull of people and they a great multitude: and that in a manner the whole world agreeth with them to practice our death. Thus the Diuill doth cast a mist before their eyes, and leades them away from the strait Gate to Heauen, and byings them into the broad way, which leadeth them to the bottomlesse pit of Hell. Therefore my deare Brethren, let vs stand fast in the word of the Lord, and take heed of bending with the way, that we bee not carried away, or bowed quite downe with the raging streame of the multitude, for the sway of the world doth way downe all things that can bee spoken out of the word of God, and openeth a very wide passage into Hell.

Now let vs proceed to the fourth Gate into Hell, which is the long custome of sinne, for that taketh away all sense and feeling of sinne, and making it as it were another nature vnto vs, so that wee may as well alter nature as shake it off, when it is thus soldered vnto vs through long custome, this

is

is noted by the Prophet Jeremy to bee a very dangerous thing. For hee saith; Can the black More change his skinne, or the Leopard his spots? then may yee also doe good, which are accustomed to doe euill. Here the Prophet affirmeth, that it is as hard to cure an old disease that is bred in the bone, or to remedy a sinne that hath bene hatched and brought vp with vs, as to wash a blacke Horse white, or to change the spots of a Leopard, which cannot bee without the destroying of nature. And surely, try it who will, hee shall finde it as hard a matter to leaue an old custome, whether it be of swearing, gaming, lying, whoring, euill company, or any other sinne, as to wash an Aethiopian. Therefore it is written; Prou. 27. Prou. 27.
 Though thou shouldest bray a foole in a mortar among Wheate brayed with a Pestle, yet will not his foolishnesse depart from him: So that as long as we are in custome with sin, the doore of Heauen is barred vp against vs.

Now let vs heare of the fift Gate, which is the long escaping of punishment; this is touched by the wise man in these wordes, Because sentence against an euill worke is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts Eccles. 8. 11
 of

of the children of men, haue set them to doe euill. Where he sheweth that one cause why men are so hardened in their sins is because God winketh at them and letteth them alone, not punishing them immediately after they haue sinned: For if God should forthwith strike downe one, and raine downe fire and brimstone vpon another, and cause the earth to swallow vp the third, then men would feare indeed. But God taketh not that course, for though he murther with some in this life, yet he lets thousands escape, and that makes them more bold, thinking they shall neuer come to their answer. Euen as an old Thiefe, which hath a long tyme escaped both prison and gallies, thinkes hee shall alwaies escape, and therefore goeth boldly on in his thefts. But let them take heede, for as the Proverbe saith, though the Pitcher goeth long to the well, yet at last it commeth broken home: So, though men escape long unpunished for sin, yet shall they not alwaies be freed: for, there will come a day of reuenge, a day that will pay them home for all. Thus you see that impunity lea-
deth numbers to destruction: that is, when men are let alone, & not smitten by the hand of God, nor punished by law of the Magistrate.

The

The first Gate is the beholding of other mens deeds: for when some men, that haue a wicked and ungracious life, and haue been notorious sinners euen to the worldward, so that euery man could point at them, if by on their death-bed they say a few good words, and cry God mercy, and say their prayers, and forgive all the world, and so dye quietly, it is marvellous to heare how the foolish people of the world will exalt them, and iustifie them, saying; Hee made a very good end as any man could make, and dyed as quietly as a lambe, and set all things in good order before hee dyed. Whereupon another wicked and manfrous varlet is encouraged to sinne: for, thinketh hee, such a man liued as wickedly and loosely as I, or any man else, and yet hee made a very good end, and why may not I doe so too? But alas, these mens eyes are bleared, for to dye quietly, is not to dye godly, to crye God mercy for fashion sake, is not to haue God mercifull, to say a few prayers with teeth outward is not to dye in the faith of Christ, for many doe this and yet dye miserably.

The last Gate is hope of long life: this is affirmed by our Lord concerning the rich worldling, who, when he felt the world come in

Luk. 12. 19

in vpon him, with full streame; said hee
 would pull downe his barnes & build grea-
 ter, and say to his soule; Soule, habes mul-
 ta bona reposita in annos multos: requiesce,
 comede, bibe, oblectare: Thou hast much
 goods laid vp for many yeeres, lye at ease,
 eate, drinke, and take thy pastime. But our
 Saviour calleth him foole for flattering him-
 selfe in securitie, and promising vnto him-
 selfe long life: moreover, he plainly telleth
 him that the same night hee should make a
 hellish and miserable end. Note I pray you
 how Iesus Chyist the fountaine of all wis-
 dome, calleth this man a foole, and yeloveth
 a reason thereof, to wit, because he gathered
 riches to himselfe, and was not rich in God,
 hee had great care for this life, and none at
 all for that which is to come. So then it fol-
 loweth that all such are mere soles indeed,
 and may be chynicled for soles, (howsoe-
 ver they be taken and reputed in the worlde)
 which haue much care for their bodies and
 none for their soules: great care for this life,
 and none at all for that which is to come.
 Well, let all such prophane worlholings as
 dreame and dote of long life (and therefore
 defer the day of their repentance vnto God)
 take heede by this mans example that they
 reckon

reckon not without their host, and be suddenly snatcht away in the midst of all their pleasures and iollities, as Iob saith; Some dye in their full strength being in all ease and prosperitie, their breasts are full of marrow: Wee see therefore how dangerous a thing it is for men to flatter and sooth by themselves with hope of a long life. Iob 21.24.

Via arctissima, the way is very strait, Esa. 2.3.
my little flocke speake thus one to another: Mich. 4.2.
Come let vs goe vp to the mountaine of the Lord, to the house of the God of Iacob: Et Alluding to mount Sion wher the visibie Church then was.
docebit nos vias suas: and hee will teach vs his wayes, and we will walke in his paths, for wee will no longer follo to the multitude, nor walke in the wayes of the wicked: but wee will visit the true Church whereas the people are taught by Gods pure word. The in Psal. 118.
Prophet Hoseas saith; The wayes of the Lord are strait, and the iust shall walke in them: but the wicked shall fall therein. So Oseas ult. Cap. ult. ver.
saith the Prophet Dauid. The Scriptures are a guide to our feet. So saith the old Fa- Psal. 118.
ther Origen; Clausum est negligentibus, in- Orig. Ex. Ham. 9.
uenitur quarentibus. It is shut from the negligent: but it is open to them that seeke & knock for it. Saint Clemens Alexandrinus saith also; Audite qui estis longe, audite qui prope:

prope: nullis celatum est verbum, lux est com-
 munis, omnibus illucescit hominibus: nullus
 est in verbo cimerius, festinemus ad salutem,
 ad regenerationem: **Hearken ye that be far**
of, hearken ye that be nere, the word of God
is hid from no man; it is a light common to
all men, there is no darknesse in Gods word:
let vs make haste to saluation, to regenerati-
on. Fulgentius writeth; in Scripturis diuinis
 abundat, & quod robustus comedat, & quod
 paruulus sugat: **In the Scriptures of God**
there is plenty sufficient, both for the strong
to eate and the little one to sucke. So saith
 Irenaeus; Scripturae in aperto sunt & sine am-
 biguitate, & similiter ab omnibus audiri pos-
 sunt: **The Scriptures are plaine and with-**
out doubtfullnesse, and may be heard indiffe-
rently of all men. So saith Chrysost. Omnia
 clara & plana sunt in Scripturis diuinis, quae-
 cunque necessaria sunt, manifesta sunt: **What**
soeuer thing is necessary for vs, is alwayes
manifest. So saith Epiphanius lib. 2. So saith
 S. Ierome in Psal. 86. So to conclude, saith
 Saint Gregory. It is a streame wherein the
 little Lambe may wade, and the great Ele-
 phants may swimme. **Wherefoze lift vp your**
heads ye Gates, and lift vp your selues you
euermlasting doores, & the King of glory shall
come

Fulgent in
 Serm. de
 confessori-
 bus.

Chrysost in
 2 Thes.
 Hom. 3.

Greg. in E-
 pist. ad Le-
 andrum.
 Psal. 24.

Elevate
 porta eter-
 nales.

come in. For the Lord hath chosen Sion,
and loved to dwell in it, saying; This is my
rest for ever: here will I dwell, for I have
a delight therein. Psal. 132. 13. 14.

Lastly, our Saviour Christ saith, that *Tertium*
many that seeke to enter in shall not be able: *Cap.*
noting thereby, that even of them that seeke
many shall stop short, because they seeke him
not aright. Esaias also saith: Except the Lord *Esay 19.*
of hosts had left vs a seede, we had bene as
Sodom, and like to Gomorrah. The Apo- *Esa. 10. 22.*
stles alledge the Prophets, that the *Rom. 9. 28.*
Lord will make a short account in the earth,
and gather it into a short summe with righ- *Am. 5. 14.*
teousnesse. The Prophet Amos giueth good
counsell, saying; seeke the Lord and ye shall
live: seeke good and not euill: hate the euill
and loue the good, and establish iudgement
in the Gate. It may be that the Lord of hosts
will be mercifull vnto the remnant of Ioseph.

The reason why many which seeke to en-
ter into eternall life shall not bee able. God
hath appointed vnto every man that liueth
in the Church a certaine time of repentance
and of coming to Christ, and he which mi-
spendeth that time and is not made Christi-
an then, can neuer be saued. This made our
Saviour Christ to weepe for Ierusalem, and
say; Oh if thou hadst knowne at the least in

Verse 44.

this thy day, those things which belong to thy peace, but now are they hidden from thine eyes. And hee further signifieth the de-

Luke 9:42.

struction of Ierusalem: because shee knew not the time of her visitation. Here we learn that the neglecting of this time is one cause, why not one or two, but many shall seeke to enter into the kingdome of heauen, and yet shall not be able. It is a marvellous thing that they which seeke to bee saved should perish: but the fault is theirs which seeke when it is too late.

Nine
things re-
quired.

There are nine things required of all that shall be saved by Christ.

- 1 He must be a new creature. 1 Cor. 5. 17.
- 2 He must live, not after the lusts of men but after the will of God. 1 Pet. 4. 2.
- 3 Wee must bee zealous of good workes. Tit. 2. 14.
- 4 He must dye to sinne, and live to righteousness. Rom. 6. 14.
- 5 He must be holy & blameable. Col. 2. 6.
- 6 He must so walke as Christ hath walked. Iohn. 2. 6.
- 7 He must crucifie the flesh with the affections and lusts. Gal. 5. 24.
- 8 He must walke, not after the flesh but after the Spirit. Rom. 8. 1.
- Last of all, he must serve God in holiness and

and righteousness all the dayes of his life.
Luke 1.75.

If these things be in you in some measure of truth, then your hope is currant, sound, and good, otherwise it is nothing worth. For in vaine do men say they hope to be saved by Christ, when as they walke wickedly and dissolutely: the reason hereof is, because the members must be sutable to the head: But Christ our head is holy, therefore woe his members must be holy also: as it is written; Be yee holy, for I am holy. Otherwise if we will loyne prophane and unholy members to our holy head Christ, then we make Christ a monster; as if we should loyne swearers, drunkards, whozen-mongers and such like to be the members of Christ, and to haue life & saluation by him. But the case is farre otherwise: For first of all, before a Christian can come to haue an inward feeling and true vnderstanding of these things, there are five other especiall things, to be required of euery true Christian which liueth in the Church.

First, the acknowledgment of sinnes committed against the Law of the Lord.

Secondly, the acknowledgement of Gods angry countenance to bee most iustly bent against him for his sinnes.

Thirdly, an inward sorrow and paine of

The strait Gate

the heart and soule for sinne.

But here we are most warily to take heed that wee content not our selues with these three former points, for if we doe, the vilest firebrands in hell, Iudas, Pharaos, Sapl, Herod, Achitophel, & such like shall goe before vs, or be our equals in the profession of repentance.

There are two manner of repentances, the one, a true repentance to life; the other, a false repentance to death: as we may see by Iudas, who is said to haue repented, & which is moze, to haue confessed his fault, & which is most of all, to haue made restitution: and yet it was a false repentance, and why: because it sprang not of a true faith, but as before. Peter repented and wept bitterly, and was saued thereby, though hee neuer made confession nor satisfaction: and why: because it sprang of a true and lively faith in Christ.

Quid ergo est? What is it then that is required at our hands: these two things subsequent most chiefly and principally, which may be well called, Vltima & Summa, the last and highest of all: that is, a perfect hatred, loathing and detesting of sinne. For such onely beginne to cease from sinne.

Lastly, the acknowledgement of the mercy of God offered in that one redeemer and
 - 1 Tim. 2: 5: onely mediator betweene God and man,
 the

the man Christ Jesus, with a full perswasion of the hart, a sure confidence of an assured rest of conscience grounded vpon the promise of Gods mercy, that we shall be freely accepted with God in Christ: for that,

First our sinnes are purged in his blood;

1 John 1. 2. Esa. 53.

Secondly, his righteousness is imputed vnto vs. Rom. 4. 1. 1 Cor. 1. 30.

The Fathers looked for none other righteousness then this righteousness of Christ: as the Apostle Paul proueth sufficiently by that one example of Abraham, who is said to rest himselfe vpon that righteousness of faith, which is the righteousness which God giveth vs in Christ, apprehended by faith only.

The Apostle S. Peter which fell most dangerously, comforted himselfe with this righteousness, and all men that will beleue his doctrine, affirming that we cannot be saued with siluer or gold, but with the precious blood of Iesus Christ, as of a Lamb vndefiled. 1 Pet. 18, 19.

Here then we see what is required of all that shall be saued by Christ: which things, if we doe beleue with a liuely faith, planted and grounded vpon the sure promises of Gods mercy offered vnto vs in Christ, and not doubting thereof, but with all diligence keepe and performe the promises aforesaid, then

then wee shall bee assured to enter in at the
 strait gate and narrow way leading into e-
 John. 17. 3: ternall life. Salvation is the gift of God,
 which he freely bestoweth upon all that seeke
 him aright. This is eternall life to know
 the Father and him whom hee hath sent, Je-
 sus Christ. Wee must seeke God aright:
 Ioh. 14, 15. But some perhaps will say, how shall wee
 seeke him aright? Answer, Dilige Deum
 & mandata eius observa: Love God and keep
 his Commandements. Hereby shall all men
 know that you seeke him as you ought. St.
 Augustine speaking of this matter, saith; Da
 amantem & sentit quid dico, si autem frigidus
 loquor nescit quid loquar: Thus mee a man
 that is in love with God, and hee seeth this
 to bee true which I say, but if I talke to a
 cold Christian, hee understandeth not what
 I say.

John 14.

Ro. 13. 15.

And this is the cause why Christ, talking
 of the keeping his Commandements, reprae-
 sents so often this word love, as the surest
 cause of keeping the same: for want wherof
 in the world, the world keepeth them not, as
 there he sheweth; If you love me keepe my
 Commandements. Againe, He that hath my
 Commandements and keepeth them, hee is
 hee that loveth me. And againe, Hee which
 loveth mee will keepe my Commandements.

See

See what Saint Augustine exhorts vs unto;
 Ama amorem illius : Love this his love : We
 deserves and requires love. O love the Lord Psal. 32.15
 faith the Prophet David, all his Saints. If no Psal. 57.10.
 love, no Saints: and yet no true love without
 faith. We that love the Lord see that you hate
 evil and doe good, seeke the Lord and ye
 shall live for evermore.

Can God bestow better things upon his
 children then eternall life : who is the effi-
 cient cause of salvation by the working of
 the holy Ghost in the hearts of his children,
 through faith in Christ Jesus. For faith is
 the testimony of Gods Spirit; which Spirit
 both not only speake within us, but also per-
 swadeth us of the good grace of God to-
 wards us by arguments drawn from our
 free redemption in Christ.

Rom. 8.16.

Lastly, the same Spirit moveth us in us,
 and quickeneth our mortall bodies, to bring
 forth most sweet & pleasant fruits unto God.

Rom. 8.11.
 Gal. 5.22.

This bringeth that inward solace, joy and
 peace which the minde and conscience hath
 with God, because it is freed from the bon-
 dage of sinne, the curse of the Law, &c. and
 restored to grace againe.

This joy and solace of a good conscience,
 the Apostle calleth it the kingdom of God.
 Rom. 14.17. And an especiall fruit of the ho-

Pro. 25.15. by Ghost: Gal. 5.22. And a sure consequent
 of our iustificacion by faith: Rom. 5.1. and
 the child of God in all his troubles comfort
 feth himselfe therewith as with a feast. Da-
 uid longed for this ioy, as appeareth in his
 Psal. 51.12. earnest prayer for it, where hee cryeth say-
 ing; Restore to me the ioy of thy saluation, and
 establish me with thy free Spirit. Many which
 seeke to enter in at the strait Gate shall not
 be able. Therefore thou secure worldling,
 thy conscience telleth thee that thou hast not
 yet sought the Lord aright: thou hast not yet
 repented, and thou art not yet a lively mem-
 ber of Iesus Christ. And farther, thou know-
 est, that howsoever thou art alive at this
 time, yet thou hast no lease of thy life. God
 may call thee forth of the world the next
 yeere, the next houre: yea, he may strike thee
 with a sudden death at this very present.
 And in very truth, if thou goest forth of this
 world being no repentant sinner, then goest
 damned to hell. Therefore delay not one mi-
 nute of an houre longer, but with all speede
 repent and turne unto God, and bring forth
 fruits worthy amendment of life, that all thy
 sinnes may bee done away, when the day of
 death or the day of iudgement shall be. And
 doe not thinke with thy selfe it shall be suf-
 ficient to deferre thy turning unto God till
 the

the last day, for late repentance is seldom
true repentance. And hee which continu-
eth long in any sinne, is in a dangerous case.
If a man lye long sicke in any disease, he will
scarce recover his former health: and hee
which is growne in the custome of any sinne,
and the sinne is become ripe in him, it is a
thousand to one he is neuer saved, according James 1. 15
to that of Saint James; Sinne being perfected
bringerth forth death.

Let vs therefore without any delay re-
pent and turne vnto God: for if wee liue in
this world not being true Christians, wee Tit. 2. 10.
are farre more vile then the basest creatures
of all, euen the dogge or toad. For first we are
nothing else but a filthy thought of all abomi- Rom. 8. 10.
nation and uncleannesse, the stinke wherof
hath infected heauen and earth, and no per-
fumes could ever delay it in the nostrils of
God: but onely the suffering of Christ being
a sacrifice of a sweet smelling saour to God: Ephes. 5. 2.
wee make it very dainty to come nere a la-
zier man full of botches, blaines and sores,
but much more are these men to be abhorred,
which haue lpen many yeeres starke dead in
sinnes and trespasses: and therefore now doe Ephes. 2. 3.
nothing else but rot and stinke in them like
bely loathsome carrions.

Againe, if we liue as secure worldlings &
carnall

The strait Gate

carnall Gospellers, and not as true Christi-
 ans, we are in danger of all the iudgements
 of God, so that euery moment some of them
 may befall vs. Wee may perish suddenly by
 water, with the old world, we may be con-
 sumed with fire and brimstone with Sodom
 and Gomorrah: we may be swallowed vp of
 the earth with Corah, Dathan and Abiram,
 we may hang our selues with Iudas, we may
 haue our haines dashed out against the
 ground and be eaten vp of dogs with Iesabel,
 we may dye in hardnes of heart with Phara-
 oh, wee may despaire with Cain and Iudas,
 we may be stricken with sudden death with
 Ananias and Saphira his wife: we may bee
 eaten of wormes with Herod, wee may bee
 smitten that wee cannot heare Gods word
 with Foelix, wee may boyle our guts at the
 steele with Arrius, we may crye at our death
 that we are damned with Latomus, we may
 be left vnto our selues to mocke, blaspheme,
 and renounce Christ with Iulian the Aposta-
 ta, and wee may suffer many moze fearefull
 iudgements whereof the Lord hath great
 store, and tend to the confounding of them
 that will not bee humbled vnder his hand
 Contrariwise, the true Christian is so far out
 of the reach of Gods iudgements, that they
 cannot hurt him. Christ is a covering and a
 cloud

Deut. 34.

Esay. 4.

cloud vnto the against the heate and tempest
of Gods iudgement, when a mans heart is
sprinkled with the blood of this immaculate
lambe, al the plagues of God passe ouer him.
In the destruction of Ierusalem the righte-
ous beare a marke in their forehead and are
saued. Therefore let him that regards his
owne safety become a Christian.

Ex. 12. 23

Now because you see that there bee many
strong barres and stops out of heauen, and a
very wide passage vnto hell, the best counsell
therefore I can giue you, if it were for my
life, is to bee much exercised in the word of
God, both in the hearing reading and medi-
tation thereof, and also to purchase vnto your
selues the sincere ministry of the Gospell, &
to make conscience to liue vnder it, enee-
ning your selues happy if you haue it,
though you want all other things: & unhap-
py if you haue it not, though you haue all o-
ther things. For it is a preckle pebble, and
an incomparable Iewell: for the purchasing
whereof wee are aduised by our Lord Iesus
to sell all that we haue, rather then to goe
without it. Again, our Saviour Christ gi-
ueth the same counsell to the Church of Iero-
salem in these wordes. I counsell the to buy
of mee gold tryed by the fire, that thou may-
est bee rich, and white rayment that thou
mayest

Zach. 9. 4.

Ex. 12. 23

Mat. 13. 44

Apo. 3. 18.

22.11.21

Pro. 23. 23.

maist be cloathed, and that thy filthy nakednesse doe not appeare : and anoint thine eyes with eye-salue, that thou mayest see : where you see the word of God is compared to most precious gold, whereby we are made spiritually rich : and to glittering attire, wherewith our naked soules are cloathed, and to an eye-salue, wherewith our spiritual blindness is cured. Wee are aduertised also by Iesus Christ, whose counsell is ever the best, that wee should buy those things whatsoeuer they cost vs. The same counsell also giueth wise Salomon, saying ; Buy the truth but sell it not. So then we see the counsell which herein I giue thee is not mine own, but the counsell of Iesus Christ himselfe, and Salomon the wise ; Ego fidenter dico : I speake boldly : and who can o? who dare speake against their counsell.

22.11.21

31.1.21

1 Cor. 1. 21

Now as I haue aduised you to be much exercised in the hearing, reading & meditation of the word of God, which is indeed good, profitable and necessary : yet you must of necessity frequent preaching of the word, the sound preaching of the Gospel : which is the chiefest and most principall meanes which God hath ordained and sanctified, for the saving of mens soules : as it is plainly set downe. When the world (by wisdom) knew not

not God, in the wisdom of God, it pleased
 God by the foolishnes of preaching to saue
 them that beleue. For the word preached is
 the ordinar y meanes to worke faith, which
 indeed is confirmed by hearing, reading, me- Rom. 10. 14
 ditation in the word, prayer, &c as it is writ-
 ten. How shall they call on him, on whom
 they haue not beleued? and how shall they
 beleue in him whom they haue not heard?
 and how shall they heare without a Preacher.

For that Ninuie repented at the preaching 2 Sam. 12.
 of Ionas. It was therefore the word of the
 Lord preached by the Ministry of Nathan,
 that was the instrumentall cause of King
 Dauids hearty repentance, as Samuel recoz-
 ded it, and he confelleth it in the 51. Psal.

Here then you see, that the chiefest and
 most principall meanes which God hath or-
 dained and sanctified for the sauing of soules,
 is the word of God preached, and faith is
 thereby encreased and wrought in the hearts
 of the hearers: As Saint Paul saith; Faith is Ro. 10. 14.
 wrought by the word of God preached.

Faith doth not onely heare the word, re-
 ceive the word, vnderstand the word, reioyce
 in the word, for thus farre many hypocrites
 haue gone in the profession of faith, as ap- Mat. 13. 20.
 peareth by the saine sowe in the stony 21.
 ground, he heareth the word, & incontinent

ly with joy receiue it, yet hath he no roote in himselfe, and dureth but for a season, for as soone as tribulation or persecution commeth, because of the word, by and by he is offended. But saith also openeth the most secret part of the heart, and therein hideth the word of God as a most precious Jewell, in a treasure house, for the good vles which God hath appointed. And of this keeping of the word in the secret of the hart, these places doe testifie.

1 Prou. 4. 20. My sonne hearken vnto my words, encline thine eare vnto my sayings: let them not depart from thine eyes, but keep them in the midst of thine heart.

2 Psal. 119. 11. I haue hid thy promises in mine heart that I might not sin against thee.

3 Psal. 51. Behold, thou louest truth in the inward affections, therefore hast thou taught me wisdom in the secret of my heart.

4 Luke 2. 19. But *Mary* kept all these sayings and pondered them in her heart. Againe, Ver. 51. His Mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

For if the word of God be not well wrapped in the heart, it shall bee soone vnconuered, discryed and deuoured of some aduersary, or some euill weed will grow therewithall and choake it, as appeareth in the euill hearers who are compared to the sate which was sowed

sowed among thornes: He heareth the word, but the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and hee is made unfruitfull.

But the immortal and everlasting seed which was sowed in the good ground, was so deeply rooted in the heart of S. Ieremie, that he cryed out against such euill hearers, saying; His word was in my heart as a burning fire shut vp in my bones: & I was weary Ier. 20. 9. with forbearing, and I could not stay, for I had heard the rayling of many, and feare on euery side: 10. And Chap. 23. 9. Mine heart breaketh within me because of the Prophets, all my bones shake. I am like a drunken man and like a man whom wine hath ouercome; for the presence of the Lord, and for his holy Psal. 119. 7. words: Verf. 29. Is not my word like fire (saith the Lord) and like a hammer that breaketh the hard stone?

Now dearly beloued, this doctrine which I teach you is not mine owne, it is the doctrine of Iesus Christ, which conuerteth the soule, which teacheth the word of God truly and guideth the hearts of euery true Christian, the plaine mans path way in at the strait gate, leading to everlasting saluation.

Awake thou therefore that sleepest in the bed of sinne, and make thy stony heart to bleed and shed riuers of teares betimes in bewailing

The strait Gate

wailling of thy finnes: and be heartily soz for them, and stand by from the dead and Christ shall giue thee light: open thine heart without any further delay to receiue Christ, and then he will copie and binde the strong man Satan, and cast him out, and dwell in thee himselfe. Then the gates of hell shall neuer preuaile against thee: then shalt thou enter with Christ in at the strait gate and narrow way, which leadeth vnto eternall life, and there dwell with him for euer.

Psal. 118.

19, 20.

Open therefore vnto vs, O Lord, the gates of righteousnesse that wee may goe into them and praise thy holy name. This is the gate of the Lord, the righteous shall enter into it and praise him for euermore.

The God of peace which brought againe from the dead, the Lord Iesus, the great Shepheard of the sheepe, through the blood of the euerlasting covenant, make vs perfect in all good workes, cut off al lets and hinderances both within vs, & without vs: sanctifie vs throughout, amend all our imperfections, and keepe vs blamelesse vntill the day of his most glorious appearing, that we may enter with him into his heavenly kingdome: to whom with the Father and holy Spirit, one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity, be all blessing and glory world without end.

Soli Deo gloria.

